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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 ROME 000398

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E.O. 12958: DECL: X1

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SUBJECT: TURIN 2006 WINTER OLYMPICS--USG SITUATION REPORT
(SITREP) #4, 02/10/2006

REF: ROME 390

Classified By: Deborah Graze, Consul General Milan for reason 1.4 (d)

1. (SBU) The following cable provides information on security, public diplomacy, and consular activities in Turin, Italy, for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games as of 02/09/2006.

2. (SBU) The interagency Olympic Security Coordination (OSC) Office can be contacted on a 24-hour basis at the following numbers:

USG Joint Operations Center (JOC) 39-011-55-99-793/794/564
(tel); 011-39-011-55-99-590 (fax)

USG Threat Integration Center (TIC) 39-011-55-99-790/791
(tel); 011-39-011-55-99-590 (fax).

3. (SBU) Attached is a key for USG acronyms used within this cable: Olympic Security Coordination Office (OSC); Joint Operations Center (JOC); USG Threat Integration Center (TIC); Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC); First Lady of the United States (FLOTUS); Turin Olympics Organizing Committee (TOROC); International Olympics Committee (IOC); Public Affairs/Public Diplomacy (PA/PD); Consular Affairs (CA).

KEY EVENTS

4. (SBU) After years of preparation, the 2006 Winter Olympics are scheduled to begin this evening in Turin with a gala Opening Ceremonies. In honor of the Games, FLOTUS arrives in Turin on 02/10/2006 to represent the US at the Opening Ceremonies and on the first day of events. For the first time, the Olympic Games themselves are being featured on the front pages of every newspaper; whereas attention has previously been focused on protests and politics, the spotlight is now also on the athletic events scheduled to take place in Turin over the next 16 days. There has been widespread coverage of the 02/09/2006 visit by Italian President Ciampi to the Italian Olympic Team, as well as Prime Minister Berlusconi's statements echoing Ciampi's calls for a positive, safe Games. It is notable that the Italian head of state and the head of government are in agreement that the Olympics will proceed without disruption or violence, implying that the Italian Government is prepared to take a strong stance in terms of security. According to press sources, far-left political parties have privately pressured "no-global" and anarchist groups to temper their activities in the upcoming days, as the eyes of the world are now on Italy. Eyewitness accounts of the Olympic Torch Run through Turin indicate that the public is enthusiastic about hosting the Olympic Games.

SECURITY ISSUES

5. (U) Terrorist Activity: No activity has been identified. However, should an incident occur in conjunction with tonight's Opening Ceremonies, all OSC members have been placed on alert for immediate recall.

6. (SBU) Threats: The US Government is unaware of any specific, credible terrorist threat directed against the Olympic Games in Turin, or in the primary Olympics mountain sites of Bardonecchia and Sestriere. However, multiple reports from media and other sources indicate that the potential for disruptive actions by anarchist and anti-globalization groups remains high. Italian security authorities have categorically stated that demonstrations will not interfere with the Olympic events or with the FLOTUS visit; public statements by high level Italian Government officials have indicated that security forces are prepared to take all appropriate measures to ensure the sanctity of the Games and the safety of the participants.

7. (SBU) Demonstrations/Protests: Italian officials continue to expect opposition and anarchist groups to conduct

anti-American and anti-Olympic demonstrations, as well as other disruptive activity. On 02/09/2006, the Olympics Torch Run was diverted from its route through Piazza Sabotino due to the presence of anarchists; both Coca Cola and Samsung agreed to the diversion after being briefed on the potential for hostile activity should the Torch proceed through the area. While the Torch detours have at times been painted in a negative light, the fact that the Torch has continued on its way largely unimpeded is evidence of the success of Italian security measures intended to ensure the integrity of Olympic events. Italian law enforcement authorities have attempted to avoid confrontation with protesters by controlling sites of interest and employing alternate routes and times. While these actions have thus far been successful, Italian officials are aware that opposition groups are likely studying alternate routes for the Torch, so that protesters can be standing by in case of diversion. OSC and OSAC continue to work closely with Coca-Cola and DIGOS (General Investigations and Special Operations) to take appropriate countermeasures to safeguard US Olympic corporate sponsors and to minimize the possibility of hostile actions by protesters.

18. (S/NF) Separate from the anti-Olympic demonstrations, the prospect of protests in Italy in response to cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed continues to be a concern of Italian authorities. Please refer to TD-314/08911-06 regarding possible activity to occur in Milan before the opening of the Olympic Games in connection with the cartoon controversy. OSC continues to liaise with the Italian officials to obtain additional information relating to any planned protests or demonstrations.

19. (SBU) Incidents: Italian media reported that on 02/10/2006, a metal detector was set off by an American citizen carrying a suitcase near Piazza Castello, the location of the medal ceremonies for the Games. Italian police responded to the scene and ascertained that the object of concern was actually two camera batteries taped together. OSC is continuing their liaison with Italian counterparts in order to be made aware of similar events in the future.

SECURITY OPERATIONS

10. (SBU/NF) USG security activities -- ongoing liaison with host government entities, Olympics security officials, US corporate security and the FLOTUS USSS security detail -- continue.

11. (SBU) TSA has advised that the airspace surrounding Turin will be restricted for the duration of the Olympics. During the Opening Ceremonies on 02/10/2006, the airspace will be closed to all traffic from 1800-2300 hrs.

12. (SBU) The TIC has developed a Risk Assessment Model (RAM) that includes information on Olympic activities, the movements of US athletes and sponsors, and potential threats. The RAM is intended to be an internal operations tool to support the protective liaison efforts of the OSC and its use will be specific to OSC entities.

VIPS

13. (SBU) FLOTUS and the Presidential Delegation arrive in Turin on 02/10/2006; they are scheduled to depart on 02/11/2006. Daughter Barbara Bush will remain in the city on private travel until 02/15/2006.

14. (SBU) Local news media continue to provide information on the FLOTUS itinerary, noting that she will attend the Opening Ceremonies on 02/10/2006. Opposition groups have allegedly planned protests to coincide with the FLOTUS visit, particularly with her appearance at the University of Turin on 02/11/2006. In addition, the Italian dissident website "Indymedia" has posted an alert to activists of the FLOTUS arrival, as well as a statement that "Laura Bush invites us to Villa Matilde on 02/10/2006." Included in the posting is a map showing the location of Villa Matilde, where FLOTUS is staying while in Turin. OSC has provided this information to members of the FLOTUS USSS advance team and the USSS Intelligence Lead advance. With the exception of the potential for demonstrations, there is no information to indicate a specific, credible threat to FLOTUS or the Presidential Delegation.

15. (SBU) Italian authorities are aware of the potential for disruptive activity targeting the FLOTUS visit and they remain focused on detecting and deterring any such actions. According to eyewitness accounts, security has been visibly increased at sites to be visited by FLOTUS, including the area near the University and Villa Matilde.

PENDING MATTERS

¶16. (U) OSC continues to coordinate efforts with Italian authorities to investigate the reported theft of a vehicle containing a Turin Olympic Committee access pass. While the incident is of interest, Italian authorities have indicated that the additional layers of security near the venues (to include individual access checkpoints and bag searches) will help to mitigate the risk of access to the venues by individuals seeking to utilize the stolen pass. OSC has noted that even though hostile individuals may not be able to gain access into a venue, the vehicle pass would still allow them to approach large numbers of spectators and security elements gathered near sites of interest. OSC has expressed its concern that the theft remains unresolved.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

¶17. (U) With the day of the Opening Ceremonies at hand, all daily media have featured Prime Minister Berlusconi's statements on the TV talk show Otto e Mezzo, in which he assumes a hardline stance against demonstrators and takes personal responsibility for the security of the Games. Italian and international press noted the deviation of the Olympic Torch as it made its way into Turin, but did not comment on the enthusiastic welcome the Torch received from onlookers. Turin-based daily La Stampa has initiated general coverage of the Olympics, and will include an English-language supplement in their circulation for the duration of the Games. While media attention is turning to focus on the Olympic Games, the FLOTUS visit, security concerns, and public statements of Italian officials continue to receive coverage. The following summary contains highlights from local media:

¶18. (U) Security Concerns: Corriere della Sera reprised an NBC Nightly News report on the NCTC Fusion Center in Langley, Virginia, adding that the Government of Italy rebuffed the USG intention to locate the Fusion Center in Italy.

¶19. (U) La Repubblica published the article "Islamists, Possibly an Isolated Gesture," which outlines purported Italian security preparations for the Olympics. Included in the preparations are supposedly a satellite system used to surveil the Turin region, closed airspace for the Opening Ceremonies, Eurofighter overflights of the city, and anti-aircraft missiles. The article also reports that Italian Government officials have stated that the greatest threat to the Games comes from the actions of protesters and that the three days considered to be at highest risk for disruptive activity are 02/17/2006-02/19/2006, when anarchist and other groups will be joined by demonstrators from France, Austria, and Spain.

¶20. (U) Public Statements: Communist daily Il Manifesto commented on Prime Minister Berlusconi's remarks regarding Olympic security. Berlusconi is quoted as stating that he wishes protesters to know that he will take drastic measures to defend Italy's reputation and to deter subversive acts. On a related topic, Il Riformista reported that interest in the Turin Olympics will focus more on the domestic political dispute about protests and security than it will on the performance of the Italian athletes.

¶21. (U) FLOTUS: In a follow-up to yesterday's exclusive interview with FLOTUS, La Stampa has re-published the interview in its special English edition. In the interview, FLOTUS notes the positive impact of the Olympic Games and the need for more dialogue between nations. Il Manifesto noted the comments of an unidentified Italian authority that the FLOTUS visit on 02/11/2006 to a local university presents a risky situation.

¶22. (U) The US Public Affairs Office in Turin is developing interviews with US athletes and the US Olympics delegation in order to supply material to the English edition of La Stampa. The Public Affairs Office in Turin may be reached at 39-011-55-99-368.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

¶23. (U) CA continues outreach efforts with Turin emergency service agencies. CA staff have met with a specialized Rape Crisis Unit at Sant'Anna Hospital. They have also visited the Central Information Office in Turin to disseminate consular information cards and brochures. As of this filing, the Turin Consular Office has not received any requests for American citizen service.

¶24. (S/NF) CA has established contact with the Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST) to assist them in making contacts with the local consequence management community.

¶25. (U) The Consular Office may be contacted at the following

numbers: 011-5599-330 (tel.); 011-5599-551 (fax). Additional
information may be found at <http://milan.usconsulate.gov>.
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